



NORTH CENTRAL REGION NEWS

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PROMINENT MINNESOTA CONSERVATIONIST HARVEY NELSON TO RETIRE IN JANUARY 1992

Harvey K. Nelson, Executive Director of the North American Waterfowl and Wetlands Office and a prominent figure in conservation efforts for more than four decades, will retire from the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on January 13, 1992.

Nelson, 66, directs the Service's participation in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, a 15-year program to conserve the continent's remaining wetlands and revive migratory bird populations. The governments of the United States, Canada, and Mexico, 50 states and 12 provinces and territories, and more than 200 conservation groups are partners in the effort which began in 1986.

"Harvey Nelson has been a major player from the start in making this ambitious Plan work," said Service Director John Turner. "Without his vast knowledge and diplomatic skills, it would have been much harder to get things moving as fast as they did."

Laurence R. Jahn, past Board Chairman of the Wildlife Management Institute, said Nelson "has provided outstanding, dedicated, professional services in administration and research and management programs for migratory birds and their essential habitats for more than four decades. His numerous contributions culminated in exemplary leadership in preparing and implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, with benefits flowing to wildlife and people throughout the continent."

Nelson, a native Minnesotan, joined the Service in 1950 and worked with the national wildlife refuge system before becoming Director of the Northern Prairie Wildlife Refuge Center when it was established in 1963 in Jamestown, North Dakota. Other jobs he has held include Associate Director for Fish and Wildlife Resources -- supervising the operation of the Service's programs such as national wildlife refuges, fish hatcheries, migratory bird programs, and law enforcement -- and Regional Director of the North Central Region with headquarters in Twin Cities, Minnesota. In December, 1987, he was appointed to his present position.

His duties include that of U.S. Co-Chairman of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee and coordinating implementation of the Plan with Canada and Mexico. He has received numerous awards for his contributions to natural resources management, including the Department of the Interior's Distinguished Service Award, the highest honor given by the Secretary of the Interior to agency employees. He also received the President's Award as Meritorious Senior Executive, the Professional Award of Merit by the North Central Section of the Wildlife Society, and the William T. Hornaday Gold Medal from the Boy Scouts of America for his contributions to natural resources.

Nelson plans to return to his home in Bloomington, Minnesota, to spend more leisure time with his family and at their lake cabin to "catch up on some fishing." He expects to continue to be involved in other natural resource challenges on a limited basis.